

From: Ivan Drucker
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/27/01 11:58am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom it May Concern:

I am hardly the activist type, and this might actually be the first time I have written to a government office.

I am concerned about the proposed remedy for Microsoft's anti-competitive behavior. While I am entirely in favor of bringing technology to the needy, it seems to me that this solution is to Microsoft's competitive advantage, which seemingly defeats the purpose of the action at all.

Microsoft has entrenched themselves very heavily into nearly all personal computing markets. Once an organization is on the Microsoft platform (or any platform), there is a very strong gravitational pull to staying with that platform for many years, as it requires significant investment in both products and training to change. This creates a cycle of dependency on upgrades, upon which much of Microsoft's business model is based.

Education is one of the very few personal computing markets left where Microsoft has a real competitor in operating systems, Apple Computer. It seems reasonable to assume that, were this plan to go through, that the beneficiaries would not be purchasing computers from Apple for many years. Furthermore, there would likely be a ripple effect, as there would be a certain tidal force in so many schools adopting a single platform from such a powerful player. What this means is that long after the contributions are made, schools (and not only the recipients) will be paying for Microsoft products and support, at the expense of their competitor.

In sum, this plan could hand to Microsoft one of the few markets they have been unable to dominate yet, yielding no real consequences for the anti-competitive behavior which they have been found guilty of. I am all in favor of bring better technology to schools! But that is a separate issue from the appropriate remedy for Microsoft's behavior.

I am hardly a legal or business expert and I submit these comments with humility. I am sure you have received many similar comments already, but I feel obliged to speak my peace regarding this matter. Thank you for your kind attention.

Respectfully,
Ivan Drucker
43 E 10th St Apt 4E
New York, NY 10003

CC: microsoftcomments@doj.ca.gov@inetgw,attorney.gener...